

two-spotted bumble bee

Bombus bimaculatus

Kingdom: Animalia
Phylum: Arthropoda
Class: Insecta
Order: Hymenoptera
Family: Apidae

ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native

FEATURES

Colors are somewhat variable, but the queens and workers generally have yellow “hair” on the thorax and first abdominal segment. The second abdominal segment usually has a yellow “W” shape. There is a black spot with black “hairs” (and sometimes a few yellow ones) between the wing bases. The remainder of the abdominal “hair” is black. The facial “hair” is black or black with just a few yellow “hairs.” Wings are clear with black veins.

BEHAVIORS

This species is a medium-tongued bee. It is often found at thistles (*Cirsium spp.*), sweet clovers (*Melilotus spp.*), goldenrods (*Solidago spp.*) and vetches (*Vicia spp.*). It nests under or on the surface of the ground. Queens are active from April through October. Workers are active from May through August. Males are active from June through October. These bees are important pollinators of the flowers that they visit to collect nectar and pollen. Bumble bees are eusocial insects. Their life cycle includes egg, larva, pupa and adult stages. Only the fertilized queen overwinters from a colony. In the spring, she selects a nest site and constructs the nest, which is lined with plant materials. The first brood raised consists of all workers (females). The workers do all the jobs of the hive except egg-laying. Late in the year both males and queens are produced. Males mate with queens in the fall.

ILLINOIS RANGE





Aquatic Habitats

none

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

black soil prairie; dolomite prairie; edge; gravel prairie; hill prairie; sand prairie; shrub prairie